

Historic, Archive Document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

1984 Pro

ACP in 1952

Copy 3

| Our rapidly increasing population is putting more strain on our soils. Within a quarter of a century we may have 50 million more mouths to feed.

— R. M. Salter

A Program to Keep Up Our Land—

For Ample Production Today,

For Greater Production Tomorrow.

United States Department of Agriculture
Production and Marketing Administration

PA-189 December 1951

NEEDS ARE INCREASING

American farmers today are being called on to produce more than they have ever produced before. The unsettled conditions of a war-threatened world account for much of the immediate pressure.

But even without the emergency our needs will continue to increase. Twenty-five years ago there were 117 million people in the United States. Today there are 154 million. At the present rate, by 1975—less than 25 years from now—there will be nearly 200 million. Roughly it will be like adding 50 more cities the size of St. Louis, or 72 the size of San Francisco, or 92 the size of New Orleans.

The production needed by these increasing numbers must come largely from the same acres that are producing today. Fewer and fewer acres remain that can be shifted from the production of feed for draft animals. Land that can be reclaimed is comparatively limited. How well we eat in the years ahead depends primarily on how effectively we protect, conserve, build up, and use the land and water resources now in sight.

NOTE: R. M. Salter, quoted on the cover, was formerly Chief of the Bureau of Plant Industry, Soils, and Agricultural Engineering, Agricultural Research Administration, U. S. Department of Agriculture. He was appointed Chief of the Soil Conservation Service of the Department on October 29, 1951.

ACP IN 1952

Farm by Farm—First Things First

The national Agricultural Conservation Program (ACP), through which farmers have cooperated for many years in protecting and building up the Nation's soil and water resources, is being redirected and geared more positively to the needs of each individual farm.

Starting in 1952, each cooperating farmer will be given all possible assistance in working out a first-things-first, year-by-year conservation plan for his farm that will tie in directly with the production needs of today and also help assure the increased production needed for the future. In 1952 in at least one county in each State, each farmer will be directly assisted in developing his program by his community Production and Marketing Administration committeeman. By 1953 it is expected that farm-to-farm assistance of this kind will be extended to every cooperating farm in every agricultural county.

Based on Past Progress

This new farm-by-farm approach will be built on past experience and accomplishments under the Agricultural Conservation Program. The assurance farmers have gained through these previous conservation operations makes the new program possible.

Farmers have seen the definite results of their conservation efforts in terms of increasing and continuing production. Their soil-improving experience has demonstrated the fact that the scars of past neglect can be healed—that fertility can be restored and increased.

By such practices as planting and plowing under cover crops, and by fertilizing grasses and legumes in rotation pastures, the Nation's farmers in higher rainfall areas have found the key to continued and increasing crop production.

By the use of needed lime and fertilizer, renovation, reseeding to improved strains of grasses and legumes, controlling and rotating grazing, improving water facilities, controlling noxious weeds, and eradicating brush, farmers have found that pasture, meadow, and range can be improved to produce more livestock and more effectively to protect, conserve, and improve the land.

By strip cropping, summer fallow, and improved tillage methods, farmers have opened the way for more stable crop production in areas of lower rainfall.

Specific Accomplishments

In more specific terms, since 1936, with the help of the Agricultural Conservation Program, farmers and ranchers have restored, protected, and improved: 52 million acres of pasture and range by reseeding; 18 million acres of land through the construction of standard, broad-base terraces; 2 million acres by establishing permanent cover on land subject to erosion; 5 million acres by land leveling for irrigation; 315 thousand acres by establishing sod waterways; and 900 thousand acres by planting trees.

In addition, millions of acres of grass have been made available to livestock, soil losses have been checked, and damage from floods has been reduced through the construction of 824 thousand small dams on farms and ranches. At least 18 million acres of land are protected and improved each year by planting and turning under green-manure and cover crops. The use of phosphate fertilizers to improve grasses and legumes has increased from a quarter million tons on about a million acres in 1936, to 3 million tons on 22 million acres in 1950; the use of lime from $3\frac{1}{2}$ million tons on $2\frac{1}{4}$ million acres in 1936, to 23 million tons on $11\frac{1}{2}$ million acres in 1950.

The Next Development

- Based on this foundation of broad accomplishments in past years, the new Agricultural Conservation Program provisions will make it possible for farmers to adjust and adapt their conservation work toward even more carefully planned and more specific objectives.
- Each farmer will develop a specific conservation program for his own farm. The program for each farm will be pin-pointed to the needs of that particular farm.

In developing and carrying out this new program approach, the farmer will continue to make the most effective possible use of the direct financial help available to him through the Agricultural Conservation Program. He will also take full advantage of assistance from the Soil Conservation Service, the Forest Service, the Land-Grant Colleges with their experiment stations and extension services, and all other Federal and State agencies.

You Make the Decisions

- And this is what this means to you as a farmer:
 - You will continue to get financial assistance to help you carry out approved, needed conservation practices on your farm.
 - As rapidly as possible you will be asked to tie your conservation operations to the basic question: Will they contribute most to producing what is needed for defense now while at the same time protecting and building your land for sustained future production?

To this end you will work out a year-by-year schedule of conservation operations on your farm, so that each year's accomplishment will bring you that much closer to your major conservation goal. Your program will take advantage of the conservation progress already made.

Step by Step on Your Farm

To make the best use of the Agricultural Conservation Program:

Determine what is needed—Decide which crops you can grow that will help most to meet today's needs. Then check your land for erosion, decreased organic matter, reduced fertility, and other signs that your land is going down.

Work out a conservation schedule—Based on the major conservation needs, list the soil and water conservation practices you will carry out in 1952, 1953, and each year until the most essential project is completed and you can turn to the conservation job next in importance.

Use the services available—Check your plans and your proposed conservation operations with your local Production and Marketing Administration committeeman. If you are in a Soil Conservation District, consult also your district supervisor. Get all the help you can from your SCS technician, county agent, and other representatives of Federal and State agencies.

Production Can Keep Pace

The strengthened Agricultural Conservation Program is another step forward in the never-ending struggle to build and maintain our soil and water resources so that food and fiber production can be kept in balance with increasing needs. This is a goal of equal importance to farm and city people alike.

Great scientific accomplishments to date, and those that can be expected in the years ahead, hold out assurance that our limited acres can produce enough for the indefinite future. But this assurance is conditioned upon keeping the soil productive. Higher yields from improved strains and greater efficiency in general have meaning only if our basic soil and water resources are protected and maintained.

The Agricultural Conservation Program has proved an effective means of helping farmers to carry out needed conservation practices. Beginning in 1952, the revised program will offer farmers even more direct and effective aid in "keeping up" their land. How surely and how speedily the vital conservation job is done will depend upon the action of individual farmers—cooperatively using the assistance offered through the Agricultural Conservation Program, in both their own and the national interest.

The 1952 Agricultural Conservation Program includes practices to help you keep your farm in production at the needed accelerated rate. To get your program under way with the maximum of help from the Agricultural Conservation Program, see your community Production and Marketing Administration (PMA) committeeman.

There's a PMA committeeman in every agricultural community, a county committee and a county PMA office in every agricultural county in the United States.

